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Fall is just around the corner, and there is change in the air! It is a wonderful time to be a member of the Orillia Museum of Art and History with so many exciting new things happening!

If you haven't already had the pleasure of meeting her in the museum shop, here is your chance to get to know a little bit about OMAH's new Director/Curator, Ms. Sim Salata. She is profiled in this issue by Roger Pretty.

Renovations to the Sir Sam Steele Building are almost complete and the projected move date is early October. The latest update is provided in a short article by Judy Archer.

Please note the "Mark Your Calendars" section, to be included in each newsletter. You won't want to miss the events noted here!

-ed.

Muse News

Volume 10, Issue 4

Fall 2004

New Face in Old Space — Meet OMAH's New Director

Sim Salata hails from historic Penetanguishene where she spent the past three and a half years as Curator of its Centennial Museum & Archives.

Ms. Salata received an honours degree in Art History from Queen's University. She became Head Docent at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre in 1995.

The following year she taught English as a Foreign Language in South Korea, then travelled Asia-Pacific extensively before enrolling in Sir Sanford Fleming College's museum management and curatorship program.

Ms Salata completed an internship at the Laboratory of Archaeology at the Museum of Anthropology at University of British Columbia.

Sim Salata leads the way on a tour of Sir Sam's new facelift. "These are beautiful rooms."

Our steps echo in the empty spaces. Light streams through the long windows of the curatorial room overlooking the Royal Bank's parking lot.

"Loading bay, kitchenette, washrooms." We round the corner. "Gallery."

It is a splendid room, about an acre of it. Great high ceilings, L-shaped space, wonderful northeastern exposure, new plaster, new



floor covering, new paint.

Ms. Salata is not the standard, movie-issue, stereotypical curator. She is young, no furrows, no tweeds, no horn-rimmed glasses, no pretensions.

"Just look at the wood work," she says, proud of the new desk, the reception area, the counters.

"And here's the Gift Shop," she beams. "It's a lot of room to fill."

She has infectious energy. Volunteers will want to

work with (and for) Ms. Salata.

"This way," she flips switches, heads downstairs. "Children's education workshops, storage areas."

She is impressed by the museum's record of educational programs in hard times .

"And there's history here too!" She points out names scrawled by miscreants on the jail cell walls.

Then we climb to the top, the floor that is designated for future renovation when there is enough money, and OMAH a proven success.

It is magnificent space, the best in Orillia. Great arched windows soar floor to lofty ceiling, a room with views of the old town.

"It'll make an amazing assembly room," Sim says, notes the great expanse of floor and the piles of building supplies.

"It'll take a lot of work," she says, as if that were just another item on the list of things to do.

- Submitted By Roger Pretty

Chairman's Report

Welcome, everyone, to our new Fall season! We are anticipating a very exciting time over the next few months. We should be back in the Sir Sam Steele building by October, and in the meantime, a lot of packing and moving has to be done.

Our new Director/Curator began work on August 23rd. Ms. Sim Salata has a lot of wonderful ideas for the upcoming season. Sim has spent the last week becoming acquainted with the programs already in place at the Museum, as well as the renovated facilities in the Steele building. Welcome, Sim!



Naomi Steenhof, our summer student, returned to University. Naomi was fantastic with the customers and members, and her youthful outlook on all activities certainly gave all of us a boost.

As we move forward in the life of the Museum, we expect to be able to carry on more programs for all members. If anyone has any suggestions regarding programs to be implemented, please give us a call and let us know. We are always open to new ideas!

Circle your calendars now for the **Christmas Bazaar** to be held on **November 19th**. It promises to be an exciting dis-

-Jean E. Sarjeant

play of unique giftware in the new shop. Get your Christmas shopping done early!

Mark Your Calendars!

The **Lobsterfest Fundraiser** is looming—**September 27** at The Brewery Bay Food Company. For tickets, call Lucy McGarvey at The Shad-owbox at 325-1663.

Hogwarts It's Not, But . . .

Our summer art camp was well attended this year. Instructor Deb Brown happily reports that she had a "full house". Deb said that the camp was a resounding success with campers and parents, who had many positive comments to make.

Following the theme of "Hogwarts It's Not, But...", the children celebrated the magic of artmaking in the creations.

Students completed projects such as mobiles, wood crafts, and painting with a variety of mediums.



Happy Campers and their artistic endeavours on display

This popular program will be continued in the Spring in the new art education space.

Many thanks to Doreen Smith and the Oddfellows Hall for allowing the Museum to hold the camp in the building for the last three years!

New Members

A warm welcome to the following new OMAH members:

Bruce Macmillan, Dr. T. J. Henderson, Robert Dyer

Kudos!

Thank you to Charlie Craig for the generous donation of 50 stacking chairs for the new children's art education centre. Thanks go to Jim Watt as well for facilitating the donation.

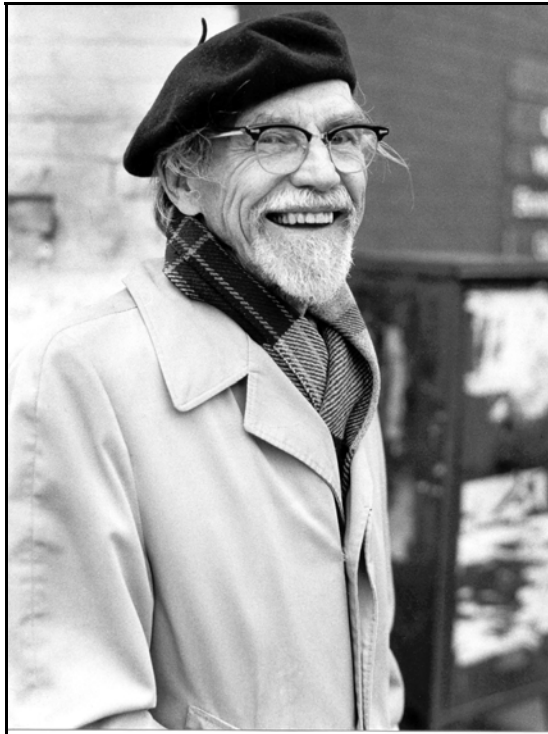
OMAH Acquisition Boosts Collection

OMAH recently received an important contribution to its growing local art collection.

Fourteen sketchbooks and a pen and ink drawing by **E. Conyers Barker** (1909 to 2004) were recently donated by his 84-year-old widow, Hughina McGowan.

Barker, born in Toronto, resident in Central Ontario for much of his life, was an accomplished Canadian water colourist whose oeuvre exceeds 3000 works, mostly landscapes.

Strongly influenced by the Group of Seven, student of contemporary European artists and abstract painting, he explored various approaches, and developed his own "horizontal" water-colour style. He painted rural scenes, and like his Group mentors, often camped and canoed to record rugged northern landscapes.



Barker, who died December 2003 at 93, studied at Central Technical School in Toronto. He attended the Ontario College of Art, and became a commercial artist at 18.

Barker was invited to exhibit his work with the Group. In the 1930's, he exhibited at the CNE, as well as at the Royal Canadian Academy.

Barker belonged to many artistic societies, and was elected to the Society of Graphic Artists, serving as its secretary and president.

His works are held in the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto City Archives, and Hiram Walker and Weston companies' collections. One of his paintings, "Overlooking Cook's Bay Lake Simcoe", hangs in Windsor Castle.

- submitted by Roger Pretty

Sir Sam Steele — Building Project Update

As of mid August, 2004, here is what had been completed at the Steele Building. In the interior, the mechanical work is substantially complete, as is the electrical work. Painting is well underway, with the main floor done and the basement progressing with Penny Balfe and her volunteers.

The flooring is also well underway, with the main floor complete and some additional tiles

needed for the basement floor.

The original oak doors from the building's days as a post office have been restored and installed between the reception area and the gallery. As well, a reception/workspace has been installed.

On the exterior, clean up of the clock tower is complete, and fabrication of the clock tower spire is underway. The spire will be red steel, and with the finial on

top, it will make Sir Sam the 4th highest building in Orillia (at 75 feet tall).

New front entrance steps have been built, and a new, ornate railing has been installed.

At the rear of the building, a ramp has been constructed for barrier-free entrance.

-submitted by Judy Archer

The Orillia Museum of Art and History gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the **Ontario Trillium Foundation**. The Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of the Ministry of Culture, receives annually \$100 million of government funding generated through Ontario's charity casino initiative. The Foundation provides grants to eligible charitable and not-for-profit organizations in the arts, culture, sports, recreation, environment and social service sectors.



INCORPORATING THE ORILLIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND THE SIR SAM STEELE ART GALLERY

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Help Wanted!



The call for volunteers is sounded once again. Volunteers are needed to run the gallery shop during the week and on Saturdays. A training session will be held for anyone not familiar with the museum's gift shop software and Interac machine, so that volunteers will be comfortable and fully trained to serve visitors.

Two weekday shifts are available— from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 1 to 4 p.m. On Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and from 1:30 to 4 p.m.

If you can fill any half days from September to December, please call Volunteer Coordinator Elaine Milner at 325-1558, or call the Museum at 326-2159. Your help is greatly appreciated!

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